

u3a High Lane

Newsletter

August 2025



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CHAIR'S REPORT

Hope everyone has been enjoying the last five/six weeks of summer. Sometimes it has been a little too hot. We are never satisfied.

A big thank you must go to Sue Harlin for the holiday to the Northeast. It was well organised, as Sue's holidays always are, and well attended. I am sure there are one or two write ups in the newsletter on the different days out. The travel group could do with some help as these sorts of trips take a lot of organising. Please let us know if you would be interested in helping.

Also, a big thanks to Linda Dale and Diane Saxon for organising the annual lunch at Hazel Grove golf club. Next year is High Lane u3a's twenty fifth year in existence and we hope to have a good celebration for it. Again, anyone interested in helping plan this please let us know.

There is a quiz evening on the 22nd August and tickets will be on sale at the next u3a meeting for the music evening on October 24th with Nancy Ann Lee. There is also a two-course supper included. We had Nancy about 5/6 years ago it was a very enjoyable evening.

Please don't forget to bring some money or cheque book with you as there are always various things on offer.

Regards,
Paul, (Chair)

FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the August 2025 edition of the High Lane u3a newsletter. Another bumper edition thanks to the recent Northeast holiday, including our usual information from group leaders and reminders about our social events you won't want to miss. The cover photo this month is from the holiday. Looks like they had good weather!

This is your newsletter. Please feel free to contribute your news, your interests, stories, poems, photos or other items you have found that you think would be of interest to other members. We are pleased to welcome some new members to our u3a this month and look forward to meeting you at our events, meetings and interest groups.

The next issue of our newsletter will be September 2025 so please send your contributions to me by 29th August at newslettereditor@highlaneu3a.org.uk

Diane Saxon

ANNUAL LUNCH 18 July

We had a sunny day for our lunch at Hazel Grove Golf Club with beautifully set tables and views over the golf course and beyond. We enjoyed a well-cooked three course meal followed by coffee, whilst tackling the quiz that had been provided for each table.

The speaker was Simon Michael. His talk was entitled "A Life in Crime". He kept us enthralled with tales of his life as a barrister in London and his second career as an author. There are currently 10 books in his legal crime series in which the central character is Charles Holborne, former boxer and criminal and now misfit Barrister at Law. The books are set in 1960s London, a city of bomb sites, gangsters, police corruption and prejudice. The Crime Fiction reading group recently enjoyed their reading and discussion of one of the series.

BRITISH SIGN LANGUAGE WORKSHOP

June Battye from the Stockport Deaf Society came and gave a two-hour session on sensory loss, a basic understanding of deafness, including the different levels of deafness and types of deafness of which I don't think we were fully aware. We learnt how to sign the alphabet, colours and communication tips when speaking to people with hearing loss. We all had to sign our names and attempt to lip read. June was very good at putting everything across with humour and professionalism. We all enjoyed the session.

Barbara Kenneth

JULY MONTHLY MEETING

The speakers at the July meeting were Joy and Kevin Siddall and their talk was entitled DNA of British Musicals. They took us on a fantastic musical journey from the earliest musicals to the present day. They showed us how musical theatre evolved and how each genre influenced the next. A strong theme throughout was the creativity of the lyricist and the composer, from Gilbert and Sullivan, Rogers and Hammerstein to Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice. This talk was enhanced by the way that Joy and Kevin interspersed their talk with many songs from the musicals. Both voices were amazing, and the addition of a few simple props brought the songs to life.

Numbers were depleted at this meeting due to the Northeast holiday, but those who attended found this an entertaining and very enjoyable afternoon. If you missed this meeting, we are lucky to have Joy and Kevin entertaining us again at the Christmas party. The next speaker on 13th August is Frank Plezak whose talk is entitled The bombing of New Mills and Hayfield.

Kath Wareham

FUTURE EVENTS

To book your place at these events, please see André at the meeting or contact any committee member. Contact details are on the Groups sheet you received earlier in the year. If you've mislaid it, please email the Editor and I will send you a new one.

ENTERTAINMENT EVENING

Friday October 24th is the date for our entertainment evening. Nancy Ann Lee, otherwise known as Little Miss Sixties, who we had a few years ago, is coming to entertain us again. She was a great success, so if you want a good evening put this date in your diary.

Doors open at 6.30pm and we will eat at 7pm. Please bring your own drinks and glasses.

The menu is

Irish Tavern Pie / Lasagne / Veg Lasagne

Apple Pie and cream / Pavlova with fresh fruit and cream

Tickets on sale at August meeting, cost £25

PUB QUIZ NIGHT

Last few tickets! Your last chance to get a ticket will be at the August meeting.

Last year's light-hearted quiz was good fun and enjoyed by all. Hosted by the Quiz group, there will be several different rounds with a break for a light supper. Questions will cover a wide range of topics and interests. Something for everyone!

The date is Friday, 22 August, 6.30pm for a 7pm start. Teams of up to six people and you can bring a friend. Please bring your own drinks and glasses.

Please, don't worry about coming on your own or as a pair – we will find you a team.

We hope you will support us at this event. Tickets are just £8 for the evening's entertainment.

GROUP NEWS

BALLROOM DANCING



The group is having a summer rest but came together with Chris and Jackie's guests as they celebrated a golden wedding anniversary – with lots of dancing included! Many best wishes to Chris and Jackie.



Walter Mason

HANDBELL RINGING

With the annual well dressing newly displayed round the corner, Kate Hellar and her handbell ringers were making sweet music in Chadkirk Chapel to an appreciative audience.

The lovely chancel made an apt backdrop and seemed to enhance the ringers as they played through their repertoire of favourite tunes. Plus, the occasional lesser-known pieces as well. A lovely afternoon's listening.



Walter Mason

CHURCHES AND PUBS

August 6th

Hi everyone, just a reminder to those of you on the trip to the Church in the Peak Forest and lunch at the Shoulder of Mutton on August 6th. Tea, coffee and homemade cakes will be served in the church at 10.30am. There is no charge for this but donations for the church would be greatly appreciated.

Parking is allowed in Church Road. Turn left at the traffic lights, and the church is on the right.

Sandy Maclean

Dorothy Neillands

September 3rd

St. Lawrence's Church, Over Peover, a 14th century Grade 1 listed building. Lunch at the Churchill Tree. Lunch 2 courses £17, 3 courses £23.

Bookings at August meeting.

Mark Saxon

Oct 1st

Hayfield Methodist Church and then The George for lunch, price £22.

Names taken at August and September u3a meetings.

Gill and Dave Edmonson.

December 3rd Pam Cooke. Church still to be finalised. It will be confirmed in the Newsletter and at the Monthly meetings.

CURRENT AFFAIRS

Q. Should 16-year-olds get the vote?

A. Mixed reactions to this – a) When are we old enough to understand and appreciate UK and World issues, policies regarding solving them etc, not just what concerns us at the present time? b) General public is disillusioned with all Political Parties, and some choose not to vote; will 16-year-olds take their places? c) In Australia you are fined if you are eligible to vote and do not actually vote; is this workable in UK.

Q. President Trump is currently on a 4-day visit to UK. Is this considered a private visit or a State visit? Who pays for his Police Protection, which will mean bringing in Police from all over UK to cover these 4 days? His last State visit cost in excess of £14m and he will soon be in UK on another State Visit at the invitation of HM King Charles.

A. There are going to be protesters everywhere he goes. Trump has his own private business to attend to and will enjoy several games of golf on his own courses. He will also be meeting UK Prime Minister who has stated this is not a State Visit, Scotland's 1st Minister and European Commissioner Ursula von Leyen during this trip. We do not know for sure who is covering the cost.

Q. Cancer cases in age group 40–50 years are greatly increasing – Why?

A. On going research indicates the following reasons for the increase: – Changes in the way our lifestyle has evolved in last 40– 50 years. The current use of highly processed food, high usage of salt, sugar and chemicals to enhance the flavour of processed food, lowered intake of fresh fruit and vegetables, higher use of alcohol, use of chemicals in pesticides and cleaning products, pollution from road vehicles and travel by air etc. Physical inactivity, obesity etc.

Q. Should there be a statue of Queen Elizabeth 2nd as a memorial to celebrate 70 years on the throne and to commemorate her death in 2023? Who will be paying for it?

A. It is appropriate that Queen Elizabeth 2nd should have a memorial, for current generations and future generations to understand and appreciate her role in her 70-year reign. The Government is allocating between £23m to £46m from Public Funds for the project which will be on display in London. Given the current financial state of the economy is this fair? Should funds be found from other sources which will ease the burden on the UK economy? Also it is important to note that some recent statues have not had a very good likeness to the person in their own memorial, which is counterproductive and wasting tax payers money, greater attention should be paid to this while the statue is in production, not at the final unveiling.

Q. Has the BBC lost its way in allowing programs to be shown without regard for the impact it has on their reputation? A recent program on the war in Gaza was shown on TV and later it came to light that the author was a 13 year old boy whose father was working for Hamas! There have been many accusations regarding the behaviour of presenter Greg Wallace using sexual language, inappropriate behaviour etc. to the contestants. A concert from Glastonbury Festival was shown which contained racist comments. Why were these allowed to happen and shown to the public?

A. Many programs are made for the BBC by contractors rather than the BBC itself. The BBC has not ensured that BBC standards are upheld in these programs and have allowed them be broadcast without due diligence. When complaints have been made the BBC has been slow to own the problem and correct the various issues which is not acceptable. The public pay a licence fee for the BBC and should be able to expect that the correct standards have been noted and put into use before being broadcast. It shows a lack of respect to the audience and ruins the reputation of the BBC which is usually highly regarded worldwide.

Irene Podolanski

CRIME FICTION READING

The title of the book chosen to read and discuss at the Crime Fiction Group's July meeting was *Big Sky*, the fifth book in the series by Kate Atkinson featuring private eye Jackson Brodie. A lively discussion ensued when a member wondered if the main themes of the story:- the trafficking of young women to be forced into the sex trade and a cold case about the grooming of young children, were suitable subjects for a novel. On the whole the book was enjoyed by most members and despite the serious issues in the story, we found Jackson Brodie's musings on life made us laugh.

The story is set mainly on North Yorkshire's east coast visiting Scarborough, Bridlington, Whitby, Robin Hood Bay and towns in the hinterland. After quite a lengthy introduction a murder is discovered, although the murder itself is almost incidental to the plot when the serious themes appear. Apart from Jackson Brodie himself we meet various teenage boys, a trio of golf players one of whom is the murder victim's husband, the glamorous wife of another golfer, a former stand-up comedian, a drag queen and a line of chorus girls all appearing in a typical end of pier Summer Show and Reggie (Regina) and Ronnie (Veronica) two young police detective's following up the cold case. Jackson, while pursuing a private case of his own, becomes drawn into the other two stories which end with the villains getting their comeuppance in various ways and though a satisfying ending on the whole it isn't a happy one for all of the innocent victims.

Our July book was *A Death in the Parish* by the Rev. Richard Coles. We are not meeting in August but we will be reading *Our House* by Louise Candlish.

Our next meeting is 19th September. We have space for more readers. If you too have a love for crime fiction in its widest sense, please get in touch.

Nancy Colclough

QUIZZING



Firstly, a plug for our Quiz night this month. Last few tickets available. More information is on page 3. We would love to see you there. Don't be worried about coming in ones or twos as we will make up teams.

It was my turn to set the quiz this month. We had some of the usual mix of categories plus lakes, lochs and mountains, famous Margarets and a round where answers all began and ended with A. I was pleased that the group scored well with this quiz!

Some sample questions were:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Which organ produces insulin? | 4. Where is the National Zoo for Wales? |
| 2. Which Margaret wrote Gone with the Wind? | 5. On which river does Sheffield stand? |
| 3. Which mammal has scales? | 6. Who was Lady Penelope's chauffeur? |

Know the answers? Fancy challenging yourself with us? New quizzers are very welcome. We meet on the fourth Thursday of the month. Meetings always have a relaxed and sociable environment and you can be assured of a friendly welcome. Please contact me if you would like to join this group or would like more information.

Diane Saxon

GARDENING

At the beginning of July, the group visited Walter's garden for a memorable visit. Prosecco served for his recent big birthday, the sun shone brilliantly, flowers were out in abundance, and an abundance of cake and fancies made it a lovely afternoon.

Later in the month a few of the group went to Arley Hall, always worthwhile, especially in mid-July with the double herbaceous borders at their best.



Walter Mason

MEMOIRS

July meeting

We had a very enjoyable and amusing session. We talked about the new book written by Barbara Speake and people said they would buy it from Amazon.

- One lady told us about her first holiday abroad in 1973 with her husband. It was a self-drive holiday arranged by a firm called Cosmos. They travelled through France via Paris to Spain where they stayed a week. They had recently bought an old MG which her husband had done up. They were very pleased that they survived the journey with others in their posh cars and nothing went wrong until the speedo broke. They didn't worry about it as it kept the mileage on the clock down!!
- Another member showed us his recently published Memoirs which is fabulous. He read us the preface which is a precis in verse of the contents of his book. It covers his first 22 years and reminds every one of the changes which took place in those decades including food, entertainment, fashion and education.
- One lady told us about her experiences of teaching adults. Evening classes were very popular at the time as it was a cheap way of gaining some qualifications for those people who were victims of the selection process at 11 years old. She recounted several success stories.
- Another member had very recently returned from a holiday in Canada. She told us about how her assistant forgot her, and she almost missed the flight from Toronto. When she returned to Manchester, she narrowly missed getting stuck in the lift which broke down while she was waiting!
- Another lady took on the suggested theme of 'our achievements'. She wrote an acrostic of the word achievements. For example, A was for art and C was for cooking.
- One lady told us about her fantastic achievement in being the first person in the country to receive an NVQ qualification. She showed us the press cuttings and the article she wrote.
- Another member read a poem about her achievements.

The final reading was an article written a few years ago about the Durham coastline. Tons of coal had been mined from the area, and the area had been neglected. Then the National Trust bought a stretch of the coast, and it has been rejuvenated and is now a habitat to flowers and wildlife.

QUOTE FOR THE MONTH

With the new day comes new strength and new thoughts.

– Eleanor Roosevelt

Barbara Kenneth

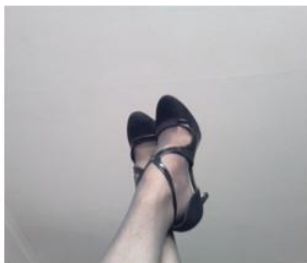
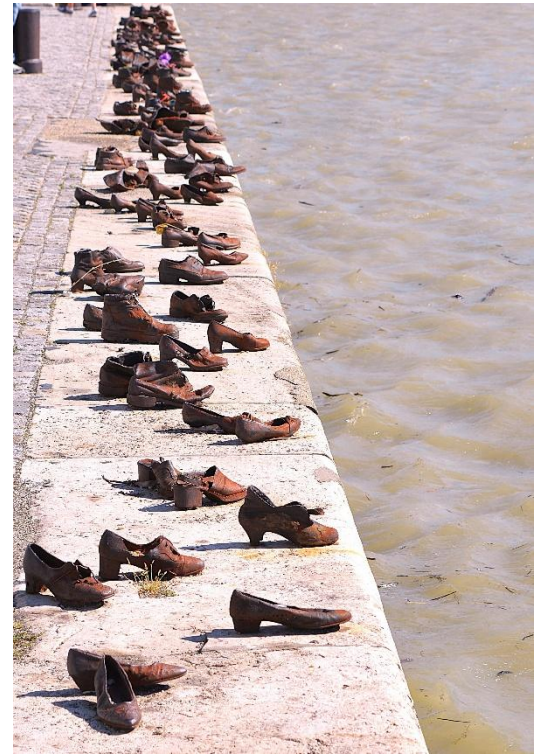
PHOTOGRAPHY

This month's subject was SHOES. The winners were

1st...Shoes on the Danube ..13 points ..Ken.
A Budapest memorial to the victims of the holocaust.

2nd...Miller's clogs at Eskdale..12 points..Ken
Joint 3rd ... old cobbler's at Bliss Hill.. Ken and Fancy
shoes ... Diane... 6 points

Unfortunately, we cannot show the other photos due to copyright issues as they were all taken in museums. There is no problem with taking photos at places such as museums, galleries or National Trust properties for your personal use. However, the organisations own the copyright and, as the newsletter is published on our website, we cannot show the photographs here. Instead, we have a collage of some of the photos submitted for this month's competition.



August's comp is "SKY", sunrise, sunsets, clouds etc. Shouldn't be too many copyright problems with this one!

Entries by August 21st please

Ken Jackson

SHORT WALKS

July 2025 walk

A sultry Saturday morning seven folk (the magnificent seven) were on a local walk starting from Jacksons Brickworks Car Park. Walking over a field to the canal, turning left and continuing on canal until Bridge 14. From here up stone steps and over bridge 14 along lane to stile. Field walking until the kissing gate and over field to stile and small bridge another stile (overgrown area) up the slope to another stile with views over Lyme and beyond (difficult to see in the misty conditions). Continuing on the ridge by the small reservoir through a wicket gate and a rest on the benches outside the Wedding venue at Hill Top Farm, with views over to Manchester (again misty).



After our refreshments the group turned left and through a kissing gate to walk down the field passed the farm house and to another kissing gate to walk on concrete slabs that the cows use for getting to the milking 'parlour'. Passing Platt Wood Farm and linking on to the road and track eventually back to bridge 13 over the canal and then retracing steps on a narrow path and through a kissing gate onto a field that took us back to Jackson Brick Works Car Park.

Ruth Smith

Thoughts on walking from an AI engine

Walking is free therapy, with bonus scenery and squirrels
 My pace is somewhere between a lost tourist and a late-for-work panic.
 I like long walks—especially when they're taken by people who annoy me.
 Walking is my exercise ... and my excuse to snoop on neighbourhood drama

TRAVEL GROUP**North East Holiday 6-11th July 2025****Outwood Journey and Raby Castle**

After a damp start, we arrived at Raby Castle where we descended on the restaurant for lunch. After lunch we strolled through the beautifully manicured gardens, the topiary hedging in the walled garden was amazing. We wandered up the hill to the castle where we were met by an extremely knowledgeable guide who gave us a very interesting talk on its history and a tour of the castle. A house has been built inside the castle with beautiful rooms; one lounge had a very impressive clock with a face on both sides so everyone could see the time from wherever they were sitting. Another lounge had a wonderful chandelier with a pineapple in the centre showing their position in society and to make guests feel welcome. We had time to stroll back to the coach via the shop for a welcome chocolate and brandy. HA HA!!

Doreen Potts

Richmond Monday 7th July AM

The town on the hill
 Warm, old stone houses, charming still.
 The traditional marketplace
 Where life is at a slower pace.
 We are met with a friendly smile
 By shopkeepers going the extra mile.
 With the castle and Green Howards at its
 heart
 Where would be a good place to start?
 Perhaps at the church with gardens for all,
 Or even a pub that was the Town Hall
 The river is down a steep slope
 So, a climb up from there is just a no hope.
 So were we able to get our fill
 Of Richmond, the town on the hill?

The Bowes Museum Monday 7th July PM

Once upon a time there came a point in the
 life,
 Of a man called John, along with his wife,
 When they had a wish in the 19th century
 To show many wonderful treasures a-
 plenty.
 A place took shape in the name of the
 Bowes
 In the elaborate style of a French chateau.
 All gathered together

To stay there forever
 Landscapes and portraits of those gone
 before,
 A Constable, a Canaletto for sure.
 Did you see, did you stay
 To see the spectacle performed everyday
 Of a clockwork silver Swan
 Who caught a fish?
 I saw, in a cabinet, a Meissen dish!
 There were colourful, intricate tapestries
 and fashions galore.
 Worn through the seasons, all four.
 Did you see the child who wanted to play
 And with the doll's houses to stay?
 The rocking horse was a favourite toy
 And the pianos' melodies gave us such joy.
 When we could take in no more
 We rested, looked after for sure
 By wonderful staff who served us tea.
 It was all we could wish it to be.
 We hoped the rest of our holiday
 Would match the wonders we had seen
 today.
 We reflected on a fulfilling day
 Walking slowly back to Richard and the
 nearby bus bay.
 Although we knew it could not come free,
 All would be topped off by a cold G and T!
 Sheila Small

North Yorkshire Moors Railway Tuesday 8th July

On Tuesday we made our way over Blakey Ridge to
 Pickering for a 2-hour steam train journey to Whitby on
 the NYMR. It was lovely to step back in time to the age of
 steam and enjoy the beautiful countryside at a leisurely
 pace. Our engine "Repton" was resplendent in olive green
 and drew a crowd of photographers on the station
 platform. At Whitby some of us took the 199 steps leading
 up to Whitby Abbey. They are a bit of a climb but the
 abbey itself and the views from the top made it well worth
 the effort.

Andrew Dugdale and Tony Cummings



1NYMR Southern Locomotive "Repton"

National Museum of the Royal Navy, Hartlepool Wednesday 9th July AM

On Wednesday we set off to the coast for our visit to The National Museum of the Royal Navy, where we were able to experience what life was like on Europe's oldest floating warship, HMS Trincomalee, named after the port where it was launched in Sri Lanka. After the naval battles of the Napoleonic Wars, oak was in short supply in England, so an alternative had to be found, and teak was found to be an excellent substitute as its density ensured it did not rot or become damaged by insects. We were able to see how hard life was for the sailors, how the animals were kept for food, and the relatively luxurious quarters of the captain.



Around the dock were buildings housing the shops supplying items required for navigation in those days: nautical instruments, ships' supplies and clothing. School parties seemed to be having a lot of fun re-enacting life at sea in the 19th century. All in all, it was a very interesting experience, especially for me, as my great grandfather captained a similar sized ship in the middle of the nineteenth century.

Marlene Brooks

Seaham and The National Glass Centre at Sunderland University PM

From Hartlepool we travelled to Seaham for lunch. Today it is a seaside town but in the 19th century it developed as a result of investment in its harbour and coal mine. An iconic statue of a WW1 soldier (Tommy) was on the seafront surrounded by beautifully kept gardens. The sun continued to shine so some of us sat outside eating our fish and chips lunch.

Onwards to the National Glass Centre, one of the few places where glass making is developed and taught in the UK. The industry began here in 1696 using the cheap coal and good quality sand from the banks of the River Wear. There were three main factories producing bottle glass, window glass and tableware. They engraved, did acid etching and pressed glass designs. We watched the whole process in the making of a tall, slim vase with a fluted edge and colour flecks. It was extremely interesting watching the skilled craftsmen making the whole process look so easy. There was a huge variety of modern art glass on show and for sale in this lovely contemporary building. Sue Harlin and Val Crowther



Glass Blowing Demonstration, National Glass Museum, Sunderland University

Durham and River Cruise Thursday 10th July

We visited Durham city on Thursday 10th July for a cruise on the Prince Bishop Boat Cruiser on the River Wear, followed by a free time ramble round the city, with its splendid famous view of the cathedral and castle. We split into two groups: those who wanted to walk and those who didn't. (It was hilly and very hot!) Unfortunately, the bus didn't come for the second group but for those of us who walked we spent a pleasant hour floating down the river accompanied by a very knowledgeable guide. The river was low and pretty murky; some fish were jumping in the still waters and even a heron was fishing on the bank. The second group didn't miss out as they took a later cruise and enjoyed the beautiful sunshine whilst cruising serenely along the River Wear.



After this, we had some free time for lunch or sight-seeing round the city. Some of us ventured up to the cathedral, which never fails to amaze and inspire with the skill of the architects and builders. Homeward bound to our hotel in Darlington, after passing a very pleasant day in the lovely city of Durham and being blessed with wonderful weather.
Sue Dintinger

Helmsley, Calf's Head Hotel, Worston Friday 11th July

On leaving our hotel we travelled to Bilsdale along a scenic drive through the Yorkshire Moors. We stopped for lunch at Helmsley a pretty market town where most of us had a snack for lunch or an ice cream and cold drink. Today was very hot so we didn't stay too long in Helmsley and strolled back to the air-conditioned coach and a cold G&T, beer or ice-cold water.



Leaving Helmsley for a lovely drive through the moors to the Calf's Head at Worston where a carvery meal was booked for 5pm. The carvery was excellent, the service was excellent, and the sweets were amazing, I think we counted a choice of 25 sweets!! All this followed by tea or coffee was a great end to an enjoyable holiday.
Sue Harlin

Alternative Northeast report

Thirty plus of us gathered on Sunday, 6th July at Alderdale Road to board the coach for Darlington in the Northeast. Before some even arrived for the coach things were going wrong.

What started as a booking for a taxi ended up with two booked but only one turning up. A taxi had been booked to take four people but then another lady asked if she could join them. The person booking the taxi then had to order another taxi so they could all get in. The first taxi arrived and the lady who had booked came out to sort out who was going in which taxi. It was agreed that one of the party would go in the taxi, pick up the extra person and the others would follow in the second taxi. It was then discovered that only one taxi was coming. Panic. The taxi driver said he would sort the taxi out. In the end he took two people to the coach and came back for the others. When he came back to pick the others up, he asked the lady who ordered the taxis where her luggage was. She said you took it on the first trip. He said that he hadn't and that it had not been given to him. Panic again. It turned out she had put it outside the front door while she shut it, and it was still there hidden by a car. Apparently, the taxi driver was very helpful.

We left at 9am and everything was fine until the evening mealtime. We came down for the evening meal at 7.30pm. The meal took over two hours to serve and some of it was not very hot. Complaints were made and apologies were given along with an offer of a glass of wine the following evening. The hotel itself was excellent and so was the food for the rest of the week and the staff could not do enough for us. Someone wanted a walk-in shower but hadn't asked for one so didn't get it. We hadn't a problem and had a walk in as did everyone else who asked for one. Then there was a problem with one of the rooms. The sink was blocked, and the plumber came to fix it just as the occupant was going for breakfast. Later, another sink was also blocked.

We were all sitting on the coach ready to go to Whitby when somebody said she had left her coat on the back of a chair in the lounge in the hotel and had to go back for it. In the evening at the bar my wife decided she would have a cocktail. I had to ask the girl behind the bar "could I have sex on the beach please". Fortunately, she understood the order and made the cocktail. The following evening, I had to ask for the same drink only this time it was a young man making the drinks. I apologised to him before I asked for the drink. I didn't realise how many provocative cocktails you could have.

The following day coming back from Seaham we were on the motorway when the traffic had started to slow down then stop. In the distance we could see a Fed Ex articulated lorry in difficulty. Apparently, he had lost all the air he had in the system which meant no brakes and no steering. Another truck behind him had parked at an angle to protect the Fed Ex from being hit. The only problem was that due to the angle he was at only cars could get past. The traffic built up and nearly every other vehicle was a Fed Ex. The

police arrived after about twenty minutes and set about solving the problem, which they did efficiently. Our coach and a few other vehicles had to reverse about two hundred yards to the slip road to get off the motorway. Because we had been stuck there for a while the coach driver said we would stop at Durham services. As we got off the coach, he asked us to be back in 15 minutes. We all were apart from one who decided to have a look at the books in WH Smith, so we had to wait for her to return to the coach. There was a transgender person in the ladies' toilets with very hairy legs. We arrived back at the hotel just in time to have a shower before the evening meal.

Thursday, we left for Durham for a river trip. We got to the coach drop off point where the shuttle bus was supposed to pick us up. The shuttle bus did not turn up. Our guide made some phone calls and was told instead of two shuttle buses there was only one and there was no guarantee that it would turn up and it didn't. The guide then rang the boat skipper, and he put the sailing back 30 minutes in the hope of us making it down to the berth in time. Those of the group that said they could walk set off and were able to get on the boat. As you've guessed the shuttle bus didn't turn up. The guide flagged a taxi down and five got in the taxi but not before one lady slipped and fell into the taxi. Fortunately, she was okay. The taxi came back and took some more people down to the boat, but it had already sailed. The skipper had agreed to take anyone who missed the boat on the next sailing an hour later. Luckily the rest made that one. As it was so hot after the sailing, four of us caught a taxi back to the pickup point and went into the Radisson Blue hotel where it was nice and cool and had a drink until the coach arrived.

An excellent end to an enjoyable week. No names mentioned to protect the guilty. Hope you enjoyed the alternative report. Once again from everyone on the trip.

Thanks, Sue. A very enjoyable holiday

Paul Kenneth

TRAVEL

Ireland	September 1 st – 5 th Please come to the August meeting to collect information and boarding cards for the flight to Cork.
POTTERS RESORTS FIVE LAKES	Jan 26th–30th Waiting list. Please contact Sue Harlin for further information.



Margaret McDermott

WALKING

Walk 30Jul25: Ashford in the Water – Monsal Trail/Head – Pennyunk Lane

There was a good turnout for this 5-mile summer walk in the centre of the Peak District.

We started with a brief tour of Ashford, learning about some of the history of this beautiful village. In 926, the village was known as Æscforda, being a ford (over the river Wye) where ash trees grow. In the Domesday Book of 1086, it was recorded as Aisseford. The village was known for Lead Refining (mentioned in The Domesday Book), and the Black Marble industry, both of which have long ceased. The latter was first quarried then mined locally, and mills were built to cut and polish it using water power from the river.

We were able to see a fine example of Black Marble (not actually a marble but an impure form of limestone naturally impregnated with a bitumen) in the Holy Trinity Parish Church – a table inlaid with Black Marble and various other decorative Peak District minerals. The church is thought to originally date from around 1205, but has been renovated and extended several times over the centuries.

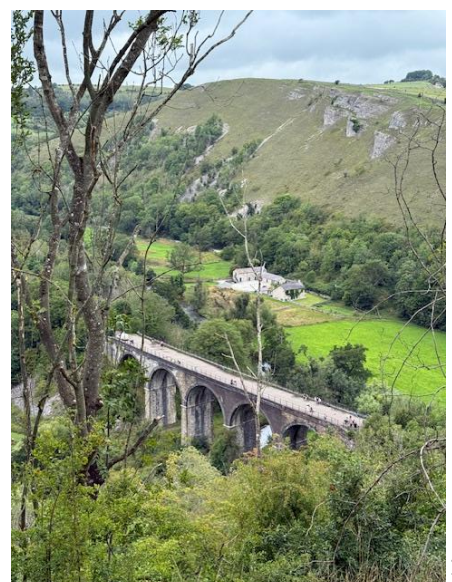
Still in the village, we visited the picturesque Sheepwash Bridge (a scheduled ancient monument where traditional sheep-washing practices carried on until the 1960's), and the sites of two of the village wells, sadly now with the pumps removed and more modern structures over them.



We then set off north on the walk proper, over the fields towards the Monsal Trail. On the way we passed close by the Peak Ales brewery, which was obviously in production. The odour was tempting a few of the walkers to divert!



However, we made do with a welcome coffee break in the sunshine.



On reaching the trail we turned west and soon arrived at Headstone Tunnel, which at 533 yards is the longest on this former railway line, followed by the magnificent Headstone Viaduct. The line was constructed in the 1850s and 60s by the Midland Railway to link Manchester with London. This involved extending the existing line from Ambergate to Rowsley, and then on to Buxton. Here it would connect with the Stockport, Disley and Whaley Bridge Railway which was also extended to Buxton. This original route would have seen trains running through High Lane at Middlewood, but railway politics intervened, and Midland built a junction just after Millers Dale routed the line through Great Rocks Dale, Chapel-en-le-Frith and Chinley to meet the existing line at New Mills. This section of line is still in use for Quarry traffic.



Leaving the Trail, we climbed steeply up to Monsal Head where we had lunch and splendid views. A rather narrow and somewhat overgrown path along the shoulder of Monsal Dale took us to open fields and a somewhat easier path back to Ashford, where some of the group retired to the Ashford Arms for welcome refreshments!

Peter Wareham

NATIONAL OFFICE LEARNING EVENTS FOR AUGUST

A selection of this month's events you might want to book. There are many more including Mindfulness and Yoga.

- 5 August Flight Inspirations Aviation Meeting: The History and Future of Drones
- 15 August George Mallory
- 26 August Climate Change and Artificial Intelligence
- 28 August Secrets of the Human Brain: Talk Seven – Touch and Pain

All are free via Zoom. Remember they can fill up quickly. Click here for details and to book a place. <https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events>

If you attend one of these events, I'm sure others would be interested so please could you write a brief piece for the next edition of the newsletter.